

**TALES OF THE
DEAD, AND
OTHER POEMS**

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Tales of the Dead, and Other Poems by John Heneage Jesse

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JOHN HENEAGE JESSE

**TALES OF THE
DEAD, AND
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TALES OF THE DEAD;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

JOHN HENEAGE JESSE, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS,"
&c. &c.

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FOR

J. MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET,

MDCCCXXX.

TO
HER MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,
QUEEN ADELAIDE,

THESE POEMS

ARE,

WITH HER MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION,

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HER MAJESTY'S MOST GRATEFUL

MOST HUMBLE

AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

It was in the still and beautiful hour of an Italian sunset that I sat with the young Contessa di F ———, and a small party of friends, on the fairy banks of the Lago Maggiore. As it has been my chief delight through life to search out whatever is sublime and beautiful in nature, it is to be expected that I should have beheld many scenes in my wanderings to which the mind recurs with pleasure and satisfaction; but the delicious scene which I that day witnessed, I

never recollect to have seen equalled, either before or since. To those who have wandered on the banks of that delightful lake, it would be foolish to recal scenes which must have made too deep an impression ever to be forgotten: to those whose fortune has never led them there, it would be useless to attempt to describe what is in fact indescribable.

As the setting sun threw its bright beams over the waters, and while the evening breeze, loaded with the perfume of the orange and citron trees, flung its fragrance around us, I felt that there was nothing wanting in that hour but solitude and loneliness; but to an Italian, whose eye has been accustomed to luxuriate amid such scenes from his youth, there was still a something wanting to give a more than momen-

tary interest to scenes, which, however beautiful in themselves, had been too often gazed at not to require some more artificial inducements to pleasure than the beautiful objects which they presented. A proposal, therefore, of the young countess, that each of the party should relate some interesting tale, was received by those present with a general feeling of satisfaction. Several wild and beautiful stories were narrated; among them I selected the four which will be found in this collection, and which I considered, at the time, not altogether unadapted for English poetry. But when I recollect how simple they are, not only in themselves, but in the manner in which I have related them, it is not without feelings of diffidence and hesitation that I give them to the world—more particularly as, in the perusal of them,